

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, February 27. 1692.

Quest. 1. **S**ay, Learn'd Athenians, how are Bodies mov'd
By foreign Spirits, or by what power are shov'd.
We by applying Matter, Motion cause;
They are not Matter, act by other Laws
Latent to me, instruct my Ignorance
In what they are, and what we learn from thence?

Ans. Bodies ne're move till mov'd, as all believe,
Nor can what's passive active motion give.
Mind is all act, all Matter mov'd we find
By some directing or informing Mind.
This a First Mover necessary shows,
But how that Mover moves, he only knows.

Quest. 2. What's an Idea, or by what Power do we
When absent from the Object, think we see?

Ans. What e're Impressions outward Objects make,
The ductile Fancy is prepar'd to take,
Stamp'd on the Brain, the Signature receives,
Which still behind its Airy Image leaves:
To this the Mind adverts, by this we all
That's absent see, and this Idea call.

Quest. 3. If we are free, and what we please procure
In chusing what is good, we merit sure;
If we are fated, strange was Heav'n's intent.
First Cause the Sin, then make the Punishment,
If both are false, then sure our Reason's blind,
And we must grope in Faithour Heaven to find?

Ans. What e're has Reason's free, tho' free in vain,
While 'Sence does all our boasted Reason chain:
Here Heav'n must aid, and Mans fond Pride dethrone,
He merits not whose Good's not half his own.
Faith lends us Eyes to Heav'n to find the way,
And none but Birds of Night will hate the Day.

Quest. 4. Since there's no Man can be reputed wise
Who throws away his Coyn at Lotteries:
And worse than Marriage, none is lately grown, (a)
When for one Prize a thousand Blanks are drawn:
Why then so forward are most men to marry,
When they see others daily to miscarry?

(a) Its scarce sence, but 'tis pity to make it better.

Ans. Few rail at Love but when beyond their pow'r,
As Wily Reynard cry'd, The Grapes are sour.
And Love, e're we a just Possession win
Must only be a Torment, or a Sin.
Since most are Fools, 'tis but an equal Law
That those who Counters stake, a Blank shou'd draw.

Quest. 5. Can Witches by the Aid of Pow'rs below
Transform themselves to Beasts? Can Nature know
Save Natures God any Superior Pow'rs?
Sure 'tis above its own which changes ours?

Ans. Ere he those miserable Wretches leaves
The grand Deceiver only them deceives;
Yet we his Skill in Nature vast esteem,
He's wise, and Hobbs himself's a Dunce to him:
Th' old subtle Serpent must have things good store,
What that (b) can do, he does, but can no more.

(b) Nature.

Quest. 6. Tell me, ye Learned Heads, if such there be,
Natures profound and secret Mysterie:

- 1 How this vast Orb on unseen Axles turns,
- 2 And unconsum'd the Sun for ever burns?
- 3 What unknown Power gives its Heat such Force,
Orders its motion, and directs its Course?
- 4 How angry Tempests drive the Seas to shore,
Beat the vast swelling waves and make 'em roar?
- 5 When waves like mighty Islands rise and swell,
How Fish beneath those moving Mountains dwell?
- 6 Why servile Springs do constant Tribute pay
Unto their Arbitrary Monarch Sea?

7 How in the hidden space of Fates dark Womb
Things are at present laid that are to come?

8 Next the mysterious Births of Flow'rs disclose
From the Field-Daisie to the Garden Rose?

9 Why such a painted Coat the Tulip wears,
And why in Red the blushing Rose appears?

10 Why clad in white the Innocent Lillie's seen,
11 And how the Scent comes from the Jessamin?

12 Why humble Strawberries creep on the ground?
13 And why the Apple struts and looks around?

14 Why Ivy clings to th' Oaks harden'd wast,
15 And why the Elm by th' loving Vines embrac'd?

16 Why Nature did for Fishes Scales prepare,
17 And cloaths some Beasts in Wooll, and some in Hair?

18 Why Golden Feathers do the Fowls adorn,
19 And why they chirp and sing beneath the morn?

20 The Sovereign Lord of all the Creatures, Man?

Ans. Dear Friend, unknown, we thus reply to thee
And thy profound mysterious Mystery:

- 1 As mov'd at first by its Great Makers Troll,
It perseveres i'th' same Eternal Roll.
- 2 Vast unexhausted Vulcans it compose,
Or Fume turns Fire, and as it burns it grows.
- 3 That Power which deckt with Light the Worlds first
Before the Stars or Sun it self was born: (morn,
- 4 Or Steams that rush from Subterranean Caves,
Or Air compress'd, thus vex the struggling Waves.
- 5 As worm'd i'th' Earth, when by fierce Whirlwinds
For nothings press'd in its own Element. (rent.
- 6 Less will to more, as small to a greater Fire,
The lower wave slides on, still press'd by th' higher.
- 7 What's yet to come is not, 'tis nothing then,
And nothing can have neither how nor when.
- 8 Your pardon Sir! thro' half shou'd we but run,
The Muses Midwifery wou'd ne're be done.
- 9 From mingled Lights so gay the Tulip shows,
Or Sals commix'd, from uniform the Rose.
- 10 This drinks not in, but outward beats the Beams
11 That spends its sweets in Odoriferous steams.
- 12 Their Legs are short and weak, their stature low,
And those must creep that cannot stand or go.
- 13 'T has a long wast, long shanks, and lofty crest,
What Wonder then it overlooks the nest?
- 14 Why do the faint and weak Supporters chuse?
15 And tell me why do Cripples Crutches use?
- 16 Them Mother Nature did with Scales supply
As Coats of Mail to guard the watry Fry.
- 17 Degrees of Heat bring Curles, or else abate,
As in our hairy, and Negro's woolly Pate.
- 18 From different Texture different Colours fall,
19 Birds love the Morn because they're Poets all.
- 20 Who else deserves their Homage and esteem?
If he their Lord, whom shou'd they serve but him?

Quest. 7. I am so far satisfied with your sincerity and
integrity in untying all those Gordian Knots which you have
met with in your Progress of freeing Learning from the Sla-
very of obscurity and intricacy, that I was perswaded to
trouble you for your Opinion concerning Charms, because I
met with a Story of a German Emperer, who by means of
a Ring which he always wore, was so wholly given up to
his Mistress, that he could not leave her when she was dead
until the Ring was taken off by a Bishop who enjoyed all
the Favours imaginable, till glutted he threw it into a
River, which was the Emperours chief delight to walk by
till his dying day: Pray your Opinion of the ingredients,
and by what means they have so great force over our mind.
The Question is not of much weight, yet the resolving of it
will be a great satisfaction to me?

Ans.

Ans. We have already answer'd several Questions of this Nature, and shew'd that such a thing, morally speaking, is absolutely impossible, (see our late Answer about *Talismans*.) All things whatever of this Nature, are either Juggings, Impositions upon the Ignorant, or else a delusion of the Devil, who makes use of other Natural means to work upon the Superstition of such as believe it immediately done by Charms, even as a Juggler says, *Blow here, presto, be gone, &c.* only for a disguise to a Natural and easie Conveyance.

Quest. 8. The inclosed is the Copy of a Letter that was found in St. Martins Church. Some that have seen it, do not understand the possibility of the Gentlemans performing what the Lady desires of him in the latter end of her Letter: You are desir'd to satisfy their Curiosity, and that it may be in your next Saturdays Mercury; they are ashamed to press you to the performance of it in so little time, nor would have been guilty of so much rudeness, were they not necessitated by their going a long Journey the next week, and so should have been deprived of the satisfaction of your Answer?

Honoured Sir,

There will be at our House this Evening the rich old Fellow I told you of worth 40000 l. therefore if you have any Love for my Person, or Respect for my Preferment, be there by 7 a Clock. Dress your self as fine as possibly you can, and brisk your Blood with a moderate Glas: Approach me with that decency that becomes a Gentleman, and when you make Love, do it with all the delicacy of Expression which your Wit can invent, or your Eloquence utter, but with the distance and regard, as if I were an Angel from Heaven; but have a special care of overdoing it, and when it is his turn to speak, make silent Love in soft sighs, and languishing looks. Stay not too long, that by the opportunity of your absence I may remark what Impressions the frights of a New Rival has made upon his Breast, for a Spur of this Nature may quicken his speed. This I call honest Policy, nor can I see any evil in the design.

Dear Sir, you know Matrimony is a Sacred Tye, and therein I must be Faithful: but if this Project takes, let the delicious Man assure himself he can ask nothing on this side that Obligation, which shall not be granted with all the warmth which Love and Gratitude can bestow; but remember I am a Maiden, and that he who steals Sweet-meats must always leave the Closet-door as fast as he found it, and an Artist at a Picklock can do his business without spoiling the wards.

Ans. The Question is to resolve, How her Gallant could perform the latter part of the Question: To which we Answer, by forbearing any Attack upon the Fort, till she has got the old rich Commander in it: For the words, nothing on this side that Obligation, seem to be restrictive, and bind not on the other side the Obligation. As for for picking Locks, &c. 'tis a Nice sort of Felony, which we desire to be excus'd from sitting Judges on; only thus much, if to the words, I am a Maiden, were added the Emphatick now, the Riddle is made plain.

Quest. 9. I buried a Wife and several Children above 20 years since, whom I loved very well, and every day to this hour in my private Prayers cannot forget or forbear an Orison and Commemoration to Almighty God for their Souls: Now I do earnestly desire to be satisfied if this be an Error, or not?

Ans. What reasonable Subject there can be for such a Prayer, we know not; for the State of that Life, whether good or bad being unalterable, it must be granted that what endeavours are used to alter it, are vain and foolish, and 'tis no less ridiculous to wish any thing may continue in a State which cannot but continue. But besides the fruitless vanity of such an Action, there's a great deal of wickedness in it, for whatsoever is not of Faith, is sin: But there is no Instance, no president, no promise, nor the least Ground in Sacred Writ for such a practice. Now the Scripture being the Rule of Faith, and it being silent, all prayers to that end are

faithless, and by consequence sinful, what ever pretences of Love or Friendship may be the Motive.

Questions sent us lately, which shall be all answer'd in our next, viz.

Query 1. What is your Opinion of that Famous passage in Josephus in the 4th. Ch. of the 18th. Book of his Antiquities that relates to Jesus Christ?

Qu. 2. Reading lately a Book entituled, The frauds of Romish Monks, wherein I find several ridiculous Follies: Pray give us your Thoughts upon that Book?

Qu. 3. Whether the New Observator has not bin too severe upon the Author of the Present State of England.

Qu. 4. Which was the ultimate Thule of the Ancients?

That we may effectually make good our first promise of answering all manner of Questions sent us, we design to print an Appendix of 120 Sheets to be added to every 5 Volumes. This is therefore to desire all our Querists to continue sending in their Questions as formerly to Smiths Coffee-house in Stocks Market, and when we have receiv'd Questions enough (with what we have already by us) to fill up the said Appendix, we shall give publick Notice thereof.

* * We have receiv'd several Questions concerning *Ufury*, occasioned by Mr. David Jones late Farewell Sermon, and since we find the minds of several well meaning Persons much disturb'd about it, we shall answer the said Sermon, as to that point, in our next Saturdays Mercury.

* * If the Gentleman that desires our Thoughts upon his Manuscript, will leave it at the Raven in the Poultry, he shall hear from us in our next Mercury.

Advertisements.



A T Guildhall Coffee-house near unto Guildhall, on Monday next being the 29th. day of this Instant February, will be sold by Auction a Curious Collection of Greek, Latin, and English Books, consisting of Divinity, History, Law, Mathematicks, Voyages, Travels, Poetry, Romances, &c. beginning at 3 a Clock in the Afternoon exactly, and continued daily till all be sold, Catalogues are now distributed gratis, at Mr. Parkers under the Piazza of the Royal Exchange, Mr. William Millers at the Acorn in St. Pauls Church-yard, Mr. Collins at the Post-house at Temple-Bar, Mrs. Felthams in Westminster-Hall, Booksellers, and at the Place of Sale.

THE First, Second 3d. 4th. and 5th Volumes of the *Athenian Mercury*, (resolving all the most Nice and Curious Questions propos'd by the Ingenious of either Sex) and the Supplements to 'em; (containing Extracts of the most considerable Books Printed in England, and in the Foreign Journals) Printed for John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry. Where are also to be had the Preface, Index and 12 Numbers alone, that compleat the first 18 Numbers of the 5th. Volume (in which 12 Numbers are resolved many of the Questions lately sent us) or single ones to this time.

* * There are several Errors of the Press in a Book entituled, *Nuncius Infernalis*, a particular account whereof we shall give in our 5th. Supplement, having no room here.

* * Mrs. Norridges approved Stone Powder, mention'd in our Mercury, N. 3. V. 6. is only to be had of Mrs. Billingfley at the Printing Press under the Piazza of the Royal Exchange, and at her Lodgings at the Sign of the Olive Tree, an Oyl-shop, adjoining to Exeter-change in the Strand, at 10 s. per Paper.